

# Selling Spirits in Washington State

MARCH 2012

## On-Premises Licensees

**Restaurants Spirits Retailers – Restaurants, Bars, Taverns, etc.**  
**Selling spirits for on-premises consumption.**

### Important Dates

**Now through May 31, 2012**

On-premises licensees may continue purchasing spirits from state liquor stores.

**March 1, 2012**

On-premises licensees may purchase spirits directly from distillers and distributors. They may also sell these spirits by the drink for on-premises consumption.

### How Taxes Apply

When purchasing spirits, on-premises licensees pay the spirits sales tax at the rate of **13.7 percent** of the purchase price and the spirits liter tax at the rate of **\$2.4408** per liter on all purchases of spirits in their original containers.

On-premises licensees are to continue to report retailing business and occupation (B&O) tax, and collect and remit retail sales tax, on all sales of spirits by the drink.

### Documenting Your Spirits Purchases

Your vendor must provide you with a sales receipt or a price list that separately states the spirits taxes. You must keep these receipts or price lists to show that the spirits taxes were paid.

As an on-premises licensee, you must provide your vendor with documentation that shows you can purchase spirits at the lower spirits tax rates. Acceptable documentation includes:

- A copy of your Business License which shows the type of liquor license(s) you have, or
- A copy of the "tear off" portion of your Business License, or
- The following data elements: Taxpayer name, address, type of liquor license(s) with license number, UBI, and expiration date, or
- A printed copy of your business license as listed in the "business license search" on the [licenselookup.wa.gov](http://licenselookup.wa.gov) website.

If you do not provide documentation, the vendor must charge the higher spirits sales tax at the rate of **20.5 percent** of the selling price and spirits liter tax at the rate of **\$3.7708** per liter.

**TELEPHONE INFORMATION CENTER**  
**1-800-647-7706**

**[HTTP://DOR.WA.GOV/SPIRITS](http://dor.wa.gov/spirits)**

For tax assistance or to request this document in an alternate format, visit <http://dor.wa.gov>  
or call 1-800-647-7706. Teletype (TTY) users may call (360) 705-6718.